

The Weekly News: Week 32



The big news this week: a new President

Friday marked a major milestone for Clark College as the Board of Trustees announced the selection of our next President. The board voted unanimously to offer the position to Dr. Karin Edwards who has, pending agreement on contract terms, accepted our offer to be our next college president.



Dr. Karin Edwards

Dr. Edwards brings the experience, knowledge, skills, and values most critical to achieving Clark's mission over the coming decade.

Dr. Edwards began her 36-year career in community colleges as an Admissions Counselor. She has served as president of Portland Community College's Cascade Campus since 2014. She's an outstanding choice bringing experience, expertise, and passion to the work at Clark. Read more about her on *Clark 24/7*.

The college began this work a year ago, and I want to thank each of you who have contributed along our collective journey. Engagement has been key to a transparent, equitable and inclusive process, and we are grateful for everyone who has played a part in preparing for this important moment in Clark College history.

I'll be updating you along the way as we know more about the transition and identify opportunities for you to connect with our new President as soon as she begins.

Also, we have formed a collegewide onboarding committee to help Dr. Edwards in her first 90 days. More to come on that. We want to encourage all our faculty and staff to have input on how best to welcome Dr. Edwards to Clark.

College Master List emails

I want to thank the Climate Improvement Task Force. One of their first projects will be identifying ways for employees to dialogue around issues that are top-of-mind.

We are in the midst of ongoing and, in many cases, unsettling change at the college. I am grateful to all of you who care deeply about Clark, our students, and those you work with. Because change is difficult, I want to honor the need for space to engage in honest and difficult conversations.

Some of those conversations have bubbled onto the College Master List with increasing frequency. I want to acknowledge the courage inherent in many of the emails. They raise important questions and they are calls to action for deep and meaningful dialogue.

I want to remind everyone that the College Master List is not intended to be used as an open channel for discussing specific people, or calling into question a person's integrity or credibility.

As stated in administrative procedure 455.035, the Master List is meant for messages of broad interest to the entire college community, including class closures, safety, security and health notices, and facilities maintenance updates. To that list I would also add bias-based incident reports, First Amendment activities, and information about the budget and the college.

I understand, however, that the college needs an easily accessible forum for sharing thoughts and perspectives on a wide range of issues critical to our institution. As a college we will begin steps to review our current communications tools and policies, updating our guidelines on using email distribution lists and ClarkNet to support college conversations.

In the meantime, I ask that all members of the college community refer to administrative procedure 455.035 on the use of the College Master List before hitting the send button with a collegewide message.

I am grateful to the Climate Improvement Task Force for their willingness to help guide us in the process. With so many important issues facing the college, from the projected budget deficit to the hiring of a new president, I know faculty and staff are looking for ways to express their thoughts, make recommendations, and be heard.

Budget process

The Budget Committee is finalizing instructions for the college to assist in the development of the 2020-21 budget. This process will allow all members of the college community to contribute proposals. Input is vital as the college anticipates a \$5.4 million shortfall in the 2020-21 budget, which will result in an approximate 8% cut.

It is important for all of us to see the projections and the numbers and to have a chance to ask questions as we move forward through this process. The budget committee will be loading budget documents onto our intranet for your ongoing review.

Three budget forums will be held:

- **February 27, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., PUB 258**
- **February 28, 8:00 – 9:30 a.m., PUB 258**
- **March 3, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., FHL 126**

I want to thank the Budget Committee, which includes faculty, classified, staff, and students. I want to encourage all of us to participate in this process. The committee will develop a list of ideas on how we can close the gap. They will prioritize ideas and submit them to the Executive Cabinet. The

EC will give weight to the recommendations in making budget decisions and reporting back to the committee. This is difficult work and it is important we do it with respectful communication, discourse and transparency.

Kudos to Mechatronics

Washington Governor Jay Inslee met with some of our mechatronics students this past week. The program was recently certified as part of Washington State's Career Launch. It opens the door for ongoing support and investment from the state into mechatronics. Kudos to Professor Chris Lewis, Interim Dean Armetta Burney and everyone on the team for their work.

I had the opportunity to hear the students explain to the Governor how the program has provided opportunities for them. They are employed by SEH America, which provides subsidizes their tuition. They receive classroom training, on-the-job work experience and will complete a college program—making them valued employees and providing them with opportunities for advancement.

The Governor also met with additional businesses in Clark County that are planning to partner with Clark College through Career Launch. It's a great success story, impacting students in the best possible way.

Employee Giving Campaign

So far, 188 members of the faculty and staff (both current and retired) have provided critical support to our students through the Foundation's Employee Giving Campaign. Thank you!

I hope you'll consider making a gift to any area of the college that you feel passionate about. When you do, you'll help unlock a matching gift for Penguin Pantry when 220

individuals donate \$10 or more by June 18, 2020. The goal is within sight. An additional \$5,000 will go to the Pantry once the goal is reached, helping to reduce hunger on our campus.

Thank you to everyone who has given already. And thank you for the many ways you give back every day. Visit the Foundation's Employee Giving Challenge website for details. It's so easy to give, I just clicked on the link and contributed to the campaign.

Kudos to DEI Team

This week the college hosted the inaugural NW Regional Equity in Higher Education Conference organized by our amazing DEI team (Rashida Willard, Dee Harris, Alyssa Voyles, Melissa Williams and Rosalba Pitkin). Speakers from Washington (including Clark College), Oregon and Idaho presented on *Creating Inclusive Systems Beyond Diversity: Equity in Practice*. The feedback from participants throughout the region has been exceptionally positive. For all of you who were able to attend, your insights will be valuable to our work. For all you worked so hard to make this happen, congratulations and thank you! As one participant said, "Thank you for leading the way and thank for just being so incredibly...AWESOME!"

Next week

I hope you can all join me for the 2020 State of the College this coming Wednesday, February 26 from 11:00 a.m. to noon at Gaiser Student Center. We'll take a look at where we've been and where we're going; the challenges and the achievements. We will announce the inaugural recipients of two new employee awards: the Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award and the Exceptional Administrative-Exempt Award. Please bring a donation of non-perishable food for the Penguin Pantry. I look forward to seeing you.

Great things continue to happen every day here at Penguin Nation.

Thank you for all you do to make Clark College a great place to work and to learn.